



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois
Western Division*

*Joseph C. Pedersen
Assistant United States Attorney*

*308 West State Street - Room 300
Rockford, Illinois 61101*

*PH: (815) 987-4444
FAX: (815) 987-4236*

March 1, 2005

FEDERAL CHARGES FILED AGAINST ROCKFORD MAN FOR POSSESSING A PIPE BOMB AS A CONVICTED FELON

ROCKFORD -- PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and ANDREW L. TRAVER, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, PAUL LOGLI, Winnebago County State's Attorney; RICHARD MEYERS, Winnebago County Sheriff; and STEVEN PUGH, Rockford Police Chief, today made the following announcement:

A federal grand jury in Rockford returned an indictment today charging JAMES E. WRIGHT, 34, of Rockford, Illinois, with possessing a destructive device (pipe bomb) as a convicted felon and with possessing an unregistered destructive device (pipe bomb).

According to the indictment, Wright, a convicted felon, possessed a pipe bomb on December 29, 2004. Under the federal statutes prohibiting possession of firearms by convicted felons, firearms are defined to include destructive devices such as the pipe bomb possessed by Wright in this case. The indictment also alleges that at the time Wright possessed the pipe bomb on December 29, 2004, he had not registered it with the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record as required by federal statutes. Wright was arrested by Rockford Police officers on December 31, 2004 and has been in state custody since his arrest.

The charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm carries a maximum penalty of up to ten years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of possessing an unregistered firearm carries a maximum penalty of up to ten years of imprisonment and a fine of up to \$10,000. If Wright is convicted of these charges, his actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Winnebago County Sheriff's Department, and the Rockford Police Department. It will be prosecuted in United States District Court by Assistant United States Attorney JOSEPH C. PEDERSEN.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

#